

are often but the cry of the soul maddened by the scourge of conscience.

When it was yet mid-afternoon there were five more hilly miles for Bonamy to ride. Would he reach home in time to be the first to tell Roxy the evil story? The thought that she might hear it from some one else and that so his confession might be forestalled almost crazed him, and he swore and drove his tired horse on, up hill and down, until at last he came into the town with the horse foaming with sweat. It seemed to him that the people looked at him strangely. Then he remembered that his imagination was excited. But what were the people standing in the doors of stores and coming to the windows for? Why did they seem to recognize him in a surprised way? Per-

haps, after all, they only wondered because his horse was dripping with sweat.

As he passed Lathers's office, that worthy chevalier, standing chewing meditatively in the door, started with surprise at sight of Bonamy and rushed out to him calling, "Mark, Mark!"

But Mark only swore and waved him off impatiently, riding straight onward toward the blossoming apple-trees and waving Lombardies of his own place.

And Lathers, whose discomfiture had been witnessed by the crowd on the street corner, went back to his office and shut the door muttering that the devil and the like was let loose all around to-day.

"Ef he wants to git shot that's his road," he added.

(To be continued.)

## THE POLICE OF NEW YORK.

THE police force of New York City is something over 200 years old, and has increased three hundred-fold during that time.

In 1658, a rattle watch consisting of eight men was organized. Then, when Nieuw Amsterdam became an English colony and was named New York, in 1676, the citizens were required to keep watch in turn, reporting to the "captain" at sundown, and were fined for absence or neglect of duty. They were instructed to provide themselves with good muskets or other fire-arms, and with six charges of ammunition. The "Stadt Huys," or City Hall, was then at Coenties' Slip, and in its basement were cells for prisoners, who were mainly unruly sailors from ships in the harbor and obstreperous negro slaves.

In November, 1697, it was enacted that there should be appointed "four good and honest inhabitants of the city, whose duty it shall be to watch in the night-time, from the hour of nine in the evening till the break of day, until the 25th of March next, and to go round the city each hour of the night with a bell, and there to proclaim the season of the weather and the hour of the night." This small but noisy patrol, it seems, sufficed for all the needs of the embryo city for many years, as it was not until 1735 that it was increased to ten men and two constables. Possibly the "early to bed, early to rise" Hollanders preferred incurring

some risk to multiplying the clanging bells and hoarse howls with which the watch kept up its courage, and hour by hour told off the loss of time to sleepless citizens.

After that, very little is heard of the police arrangements of the growing town, although no doubt the number of watchmen was gradually augmented with the increasing population. Then came the troubles of the Revolution, years of martial law and soldier occupancy, demoralizing all municipal institutions. This passed, and some regularity in affairs restored, the city was guarded by a night watch which patrolled the "lamp district," gradually taking in all of the city south of Fourteenth street, beyond which very few lived. The men composing this patrol, amounting at last to about 300, were cartmen, stevedores, porters, laborers, and the like, who worked at their trades during the day, and watched alternate nights. When on duty, they wore a fireman's old-fashioned leathern hat, bereft of its upright front plate. This hat was varnished twice a year, and soon became as hard as iron. It gave them the name of "Leather-heads." They were also dubbed "Old Charlies." They had no other badge of office than this hat and their 33-inch club. For many years these watchmen cried the hours, like their Dutch predecessors, but finally this practice ceased, being kept up only in theory, as it were, by a man



calling the name of each hour,—“and a-a-ll's w-e-l-l!” from the top of the City Hall, as in Oriental towns the muezzin summons the Faithful to prayers from the mosque's minaret.

The Charlies were very well-intentioned men, but their labors during the day made them sleepy at night. They had little sense of responsibility, a poor organization, and were held in no fear whatever by rogues, while infamous establishments kept them so well paid and cajoled as to suffer no troublesome surveillance. There was no day-guard, but Jacob Hayes, the high constable, a man much respected in his day, was moving about constantly with two or three deputies, quieting fights, looking after truants and enforcing town ordinances. The two city courts had a few marshals attached to serve warrants, etc., and this formed the only real police force of the city up to 1840. In that year was appointed, as one of the four police magistrates, a young man who was destined to become the founder of the present splendid force. This young justice was George W. Matsell, who lived until the summer of 1877 to enjoy the fruits of his honored efforts, and the confidence of all the old citizens.\*

New York was then in the full tide of mercantile prosperity. Its bounds included all of Manhattan Island. Its population was about 400,000. But the uptown movement was just beginning, and at Bowling Green, in Rose and James streets, all along the west side from Leonard street through West Broadway (then Chapel street) northward to Canal street, and in many of the cross-streets between Broadway and the Bowery, the most respectable and wealthy people were still living; but they were being more and more annoyed by the invasion of the lowest classes, whose widely spreading haunts they were obliged to traverse in going to and from their places of business or amusement. Gangs of ruffians infested many of these districts, and passengers were constantly exposed to insult and maltreatment, if not to positive injury or loss; yet “Old Hayes” and the sleepy Leatherheads were the only means of protection.

Justice Matsell, young and ambitious, saw the desperate need and set himself about supplying it. He had a bunk fitted up for himself in one of the watch-houses, and used to go about a great deal at night,

acquainting himself with all the conditions and necessities for the regulation of order in the city, and breaking up many places of evil resort through his personal activity. He aroused his more elderly associates to some enthusiasm, and even warmed up the Old Charlies a little, but soon discovered that a complete re-organization was imperative. The city was filled with thieves and burglars, some of them of the worst kind. The cleverest of them came from England,—fine, nimble-fingered pickpockets, professional thieves of all sorts. A few examples will show the state of affairs.

The most noted rascal of those days was Jim Smith, an Englishman, who looked like a little, nice, well-to-do parson. He was well known as a probable burglar, but was hardly suspected until too late, even by the shrewd Jacob Hayes, to be that robber of the mails on a Hudson River boat whom everybody was so anxious to discover.

One of his later exploits was the robbery of the City Bank, which he entered with false keys, securing many thousands of dollars. His assistant in this was a respectable-looking old gentleman named Parkinson, who lived in elegant style, gave dinner parties, *et cetera*. They were not “cracksmen,” as burglars who force an entrance are termed, but “screwsmen,” who effect their purpose by strategy. “Screwsmen” take their name from the cant term for key, which is “screw,” and consider themselves the intellectual aristocracy of burglars. Having got safely off with this large amount of money, the question was how to keep it. Smith was a joiner and picture-framer, working with another of his colleagues, a wily old Scotchman. He and the Scotchman were constantly busy in the shop, and, scooping out the bodies of their planes they packed the stolen money inside these tools with which they worked every day. This was not discovered until a third robbery brought it to light. Smith disguised himself one day, and went into a money exchange office at Chatham and Pearl streets, where he knocked down the proprietor, bound him, and, with the help of confederates, robbed the safes of a large amount of money and jewels. The owner of the store, seized unawares, could give little account of his assailants, and the few officers of the law were puzzled. Such incidents were becoming alarmingly frequent, and New York was in consternation. Meanwhile, Jacob Hayes was “working up” the case, and when he detected the principal perpetrator, and,

\* To Mr. Matsell the writer is greatly indebted for much of the material of this paper.



meeting him one day on Chatham street, quietly arrested him, the people were ready to accord to the constable the possession of almost supernatural powers. Now, there is nothing mysterious about the doings of detectives, when seen from one end to the other of their plans. A good detective is only a shrewd, observant, common-sense man, who follows his calling in an intelli-

thieves, and the citizens had become terror-stricken. One man fired both barrels of a shot-gun right through his window—sash and all—at his own pump! He thought its outstretched handle a robber's gun, aimed at his head. "We must have a police," was the universal cry. And Mr. Matsell, formally intrusted by the other justices with supplying the want, organized



MUSTERING THE RATTLE WATCH.

gent and industrious manner. At the same time, detectives must be *born*; they are about as hard to *make* as poets.

Justice Matsell began his work by picking out a patrol of half-a-dozen good men, and leading them himself at night through the wealthier parts of the city, which were infested with burglars. The old watchmen were helpless in the hands of these expert

special squads to patrol certain districts at night. There were among the Old Charlies at that time a few good watchmen, like Robert Brownsen, W. Stevens, the present keeper on Randall's Island, Joseph McGrath, afterward a captain and then a magistrate, George W. Walling, the present superintendent of police, and a few others. These were put in command of squads.



Further the young justice found it hard to go. His first obstacle was the difficulty of getting impressed upon the public mind

who at that time had considerable political power, and would not tolerate any interference with their notions of personal liberty



A "LEATHER-HEAD."—NEW YORK POLICEMAN AFTER THE REVOLUTION.

the necessity of a regular force. At this juncture James Harper became mayor and set to work to organize a force on the English system, which was copied, even to the details of the dress,—M. P. on the collar, and all. As there was a large number of Irish in New York, this gave great offense. It affronted also the "Native Americans,"

—striking back at a policeman as readily as at a citizen who might lay hands upon them. At the burning of the Bowery Theater almost a riot occurred, because the crowd would not submit to be kept back by men wearing the hated uniform of England.

Evidently this would not do, and an appeal was made to the legislature, result-



ing in the first act for the establishment of a police force for New York City, dated May 7, 1844. By this act the old watch department was abolished, together with numerous petty offices, and, in place of these, provision was made for the appointment of a police force not exceeding 900 men. The act divided the seventeen wards of the city into separate patrol districts, with a station-house for each, and gave one captain, two assistant captains, two or more sergeants, and as many patrolmen as the common council apportioned. The salaries fixed were as follows: chief of police, \$1,600 per annum; special justices, \$1,500; clerk, \$800; captains, \$700; sergeants and patrolmen, \$500, and all were forbidden to engage in any other business. These sums are less than one-half those paid at the present day.

It was a mere experiment to begin on, and the first act of Mayor Havemeyer, an ardent supporter of the movement, was to nominate Justice Matsell to be chief of police, a nomination which was promptly confirmed. This was in the spring of 1845. The mayor and chief then set themselves at work to carry out the law. The people expected much, and at the same time threw a multitude of obstacles, chiefly of prejudice, in the way. Political influence, which has done so much toward demoralizing all branches of the public service of the city, was brought to bear upon the police force in the very beginning. But the mayor set his face against this, examining with care every applicant, and sending to the aldermen only the names of those who in the face of his severity satisfied him as to their moral, mental, and physical capability for the position they desired. When the aldermen found that they could not secure the appointment of any sort of political henchmen, they added their obstructions. But a beginning was finally made by appointing six patrolmen from each of the seventeen wards. This embraced the whole of Manhattan Island, but many of the up-town wards had only one or two houses on a block, which are always more difficult to watch than a solid block. Even when, after a time, the force numbered five hundred, all had plenty to do; for then, as now, every citizen expected to have a policeman always just in front of his own door.

"Rules and regulations," defining duties and powers, were issued, slowly and cautiously, for the crude organization was not tractable. A great objection was made to

the military titles, as savoring too much of a "monarchical standing army," and this feeling resulted in the present designations of rank,—inspectors, sergeants, roundsmen and patrolmen, who at first were called majors, lieutenants, sergeants, and privates, respectively. Another formidable trouble was to get the men to wear a uniform. They considered it a "livery," "a badge of servitude," and held an indignation meeting in front of Chief Matsell's open window to vow publicly they'd never put it on! But there were no brass buttons about the proposed dress, no "M. P." collar or other pronounced features. The badge was a silver star, and after one or two officers had been induced to wear the uniform, the rest adopted it without much opposition. Very soon they had so high an appreciation of the protection it was to them, and saw how greatly it added to their appearance on parade, that they would on no account have relinquished it. The people, too, were becoming accustomed to the force. Good citizens spoke with pride of *our* police. Bad ones learned to respect the disciplined surveillance kept over them, so different from the winking of the sleepy old leather-heads, and did not need a second experience of the weight of the "locust."

The department at that time consisted of four battalions of twenty-two companies, containing in all 1,165 men. It had a military organization, was daily drilled in marching and the use of the club, so that, as after experience well showed, this stalwart force could meet a mob with the skill and trained coolness of regular soldiery. This was the Star Police in its prime, when the hearts of the men were full of *esprit de corps*.

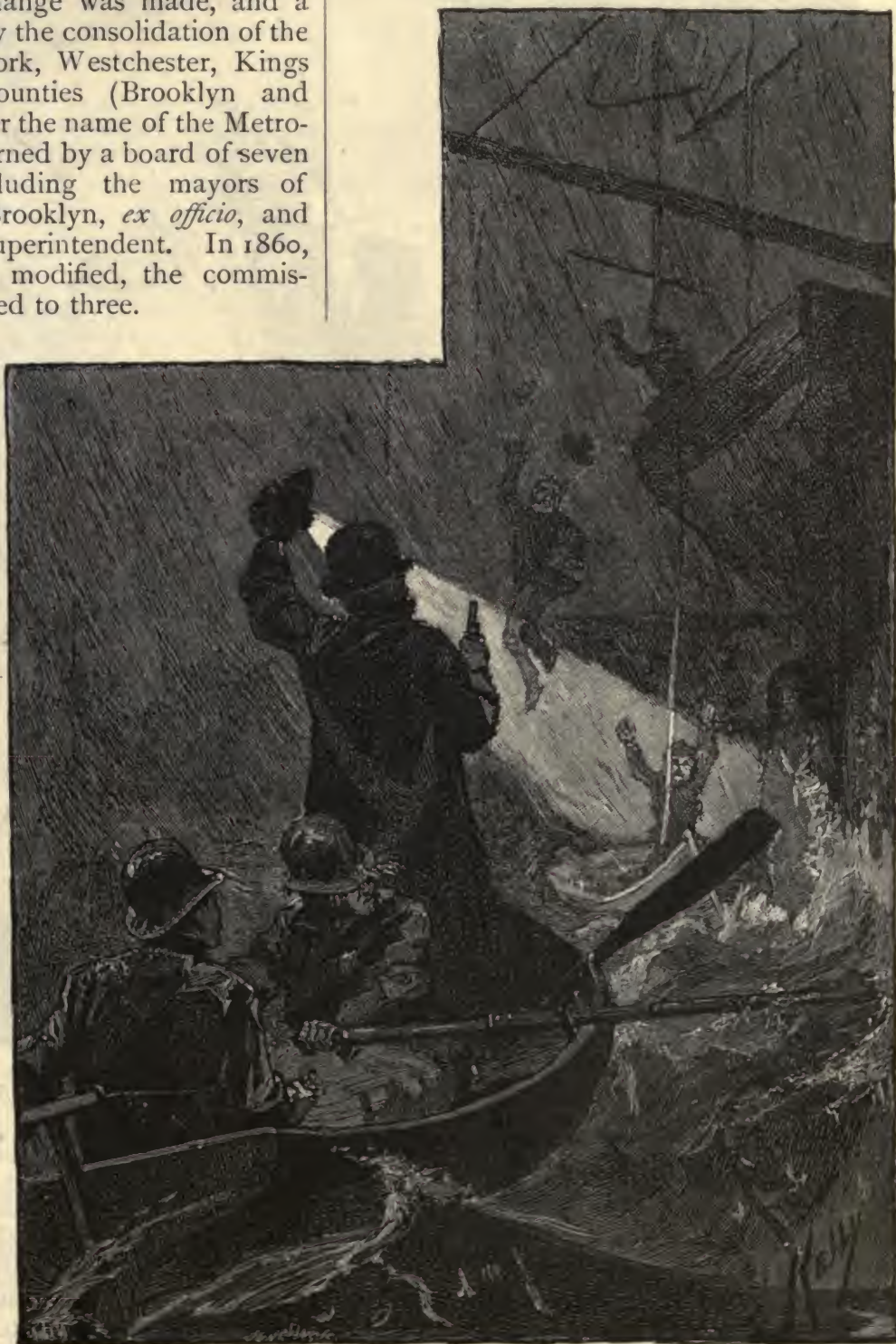
But the law under which this had been attained was one made without reference to partisan politics, and for the sake of adding to their patronage, politicians were even now agitating the subject of a transference of the control of the force to a commission of five, to be appointed by the governor, in place of the *ex officio* commission, consisting of the mayor, recorder, and city judge, in whose hands it had been placed by a previous law. The dangerous prospect of having the safeguard of the city thrown into the hands of packed caucuses and unscrupulous political schemers, so alarmed the best people of New York that on March 2nd, 1855, a mass meeting was held to protest against the proposed legislation, at which the most prominent citizens were present. The speakers brought forward statistics, in sup-



port of the necessity to the city of an efficient police, to show that there were more stabbing affrays in New York than in all Italy—the land of the stiletto; and that in 1854, there was a murder for every day of the year, while in all England, with a population of 13,000,000, there were less than that. In one day that year, twelve men had been arraigned for murder, and on the following day, fourteen more. Nevertheless, the laws respecting the police force were “tinkered” unceasingly, and its efficiency was impaired in proportion, until in 1857 a great change was made, and a reform was begun by the consolidation of the police of New York, Westchester, Kings and Richmond counties (Brooklyn and Staten Island), under the name of the Metropolitan Police, governed by a board of seven commissioners, including the mayors of New York and Brooklyn, *ex officio*, and commanded by a superintendent. In 1860, the act was much modified, the commissioners being reduced to three.

The force had then been increased to about 2,000 in this city, and was well drilled. Its services were regarded with admiration and confidence before that, but not until the fearful draft riots of 1863 did New York understand how valuable a possession she had in her police. The riots began on Monday, July 13, ostensibly in opposition to the draft of men for the army, ordered by President Lincoln; but they early took the character of an outbreak for purposes of pillage, and also of outrage upon the colored people. For the first three days business in

the city was almost entirely suspended, the railroads and omnibuses ceased running, most of the stores were closed, and it was unsafe to walk the streets. Armed bands of ruffians prowled about day and night, aggregating here and there into mad mobs that defied all opposition, killed every one suspected of enmity, sacked stores and printing-offices and private residences, burnt and pulled down every shelter where a colored man was supposed to be staying. These mobs sometimes



RIVER POLICE ON DUTY.



numbered thousands of the worst men in the city, and were supported by women who hurled coping-stones from the roofs or fought in the streets with tigerish ferocity, reproducing the scenes of the French Revolution. Entrenching themselves in huge tenements and behind barricades built in the midst of sympathizers, armed with every weapon known to street fighting, infuriated

ing the plunder among themselves. Every militia regiment in the state was at the front; there was hardly a vessel of war in the harbor, or a soldier in the city. What was to prevent their carrying out the plan—destroying in a day the work of a century?

The metropolitan police: and they did it.

Early on Monday morning, Superintendent John A. Kennedy, hearing the rumors



MOUNTED POLICE STOPPING A RUNAWAY.

with liquor and encouraged by the complete success of their first morning's work, in the death (as they supposed) of Superintendent Kennedy and the complete demoralization of the terror-stricken city, they openly avowed their intention of pillaging Wall street, the government buildings, and the wealthier portions of the city, and divid-

of the impending trouble, started on a personal tour of observation of the disaffected districts. Arrived at Forty-sixth street and Third avenue, he was recognized and immediately set upon by a crowd of men in the street, who beat him in the most terrible manner, until, after a long chase, he was rescued by an influential friend and



taken to head-quarters, unrecognizable, and barely alive. This was the signal for violence everywhere, and the riots began. The command now devolved upon Commissioner Thomas C. Acton, and he proved himself equal to the emergency, not even sleeping from six o'clock Monday morning until two on Friday morning, and beside him, with equal devotion, stood his brother commissioners, all the officers of the force, and at their head the venerable chief clerk of the department, Mr. Seth E. Hawley (to whom the writer owes thanks for kindly assistance in the preparation of this article). Every policeman that could possibly be

spared from his precinct—and patrol duty was altogether suspended—was ordered to head-quarters, whence all expeditions were sent against the various mobs, whose doings and intentions it was the work of the detectives to report. When a body of rioters was announced as collecting or moving, thither were sent the police. There was no temporizing. The orders were "Take no prisoners; strike quick, and strike hard." The moment a mob was encountered, the column charged upon them with flying clubs and drawn pistols, and in every case cleared the field. Often a single battalion would fight half a dozen mobs in one expedition. They



SKETCHES AROUND FIVE POINTS.



followed them into the tenement houses, forced them to leap off the roofs or have their skulls broken under the merciless locust. So swiftly and incessantly did the police fight them, that the unorganized mob never had time to count its own vastly superior strength, arrange any concerted action, or accomplish half the destruction which seemed inevitable. Then, when the military came to the succor of the worn-out police, and mowed down the rioters with cold lead and fixed bayonets, and the heavy rain-storm of Wednesday night dispersed their meetings, so much time was gained that the city's defenses were amply re-enforced, and New York was safe. But to the prompt and unflinching courage of individuals, and to the great intelligence and well-constructed system by which the police met this fearful emergency at its very beginning, was due the failure of the riot. New York is not likely soon to forget its debt to the metropolitan police.

In 1870, by the statute which gave the city a new charter, the metropolitan district was abolished, so far as New York was concerned, and in its place was created the police department of the city of New York. All the old force doing duty in New York was retained, and the whole placed under the government of four commissioners and a superintendent.

The head-quarters or central office of the police is an imposing and commodious building at No. 300 Mulberry street. Here are the offices of the board, the clerks, the superintendent, the street-cleaning bureau, the detective squad, the telegraph office (whence lines run to every station, fire-engine house and hospital), chief surgeon, drill-sergeant, photographer for the "rogue's gallery," and other features of the organization.

The city is divided into thirty-four precincts, each of which has a station-house. The newer of these buildings are models for their purpose. On the ground floor are the front office, the sitting-room where the reserves wait, and the handsome apartments of the captain, who sleeps at his station quite as often as at home. The three upper floors are the dormitories of the men, a certain number of whom must stay in the house every night. In some cases in the cellar, and in others occupying an annex in the rear, are the stone cells for the lodgment of prisoners, whose friends ordinarily may provide them with bedding and something better than prison rations.

Each precinct is characterized by peculiar

features, and its needs, to some extent, influence in the assignment of the men. If a patrolman is known to be a good swimmer he is very likely to have a post on the river front. Most of the bachelors are in the first and twenty-seventh precincts, at the lower end of the island, while the married men are up-town nearer their families.

The Twenty-fourth precinct is composed of the harbor police and its station is on board the steamer "Seneca," which lies at the foot of Third street, East River, when not in active duty. The men live on board of her and are sent out, three at a time, in row-boats—one on the East and one on the North river. They are gone for six hours, rowing in and out of the slips, up with the flow of the tide and down with the ebbing, peering underneath the cavernous wharves, circling around the massive hulls of the ships, listening for the sound of muffled oars. It is dangerous, monotonous, and, in tempestuous winter nights, very arduous duty; and it is in the main thankless, for the river thieves, who are the most desperate and most cunning of their fraternity, have every advantage over the police, so that it is rare that the harbor police unassisted capture them,—when they do, the thief is likely to have a bullet in him,—and still more rare, that sufficient technical proof exists to secure conviction in court. Still this squad is a vast protection to the riches of the water-front. If they could have as patrol-boats, silent, swift steam-launches, with a larger vessel, as now, to carry them in force to suppress a mutiny, or for other exigency, their usefulness would be increased tenfold, and the disparity between them and the thieves greatly obviated.

Another branch of the force, having its station in East Eighty-sixth street, is the mounted police, who, on handsome horses, parade on the avenue and in the Park, canter up and down the boulevards, and across the Harlem. Theirs it is to regulate fast driving and stop runaways; to keep properly moving the gay equipages that throng the Mall; to tame the rivalry of "sports" in Harlem Lane; to patrol the thinly settled districts of the upper suburbs;—to be the light cavalry of the municipal army.

Some quarters of the city furnish more arrests than others, and these demand the most stalwart men; but the haunts of the criminal classes slowly change as the city grows and commerce crowds them from one quarter to another. An example of this is the Five Points, a locality between Broad-





LODGING-ROOM IN STATION-HOUSE.

way and Chatham square, within hearing of the City Hall clock, than which no spot in the metropolis is better known to fame. Now its old glory as the worst place in New York is gone. For violence and debauchery a dozen localities throw it completely into the shade. Even the police station in its midst—the “Bloody Sixth”—has been abandoned. Nevertheless, I doubt whether all my readers, unless *en masse*, would care to saunter through there some stormy midnight, although I have been many and many a time without receiving the least harm.

Twenty years ago Worth street was called Anthony, and did not extend through from Broadway to the Bowery, but stopped at the Points, where the intersection of Park and Cross streets (the latter now named Baxter street) formed five triangles. On each of these points stood grog-shops, and the whole region was filled with infamous houses and tumble-down tenements, inhabited by the poorest and most abandoned persons,—the dregs of the city, drained, as it were, into this sink. It would be unpleasant to insist upon all the disagreeable features; they are sufficiently apparent to-day, when the light has been let in by the opening of Worth street, and the population reduced by the demolition of many of the old rookeries

and the closing of such alleys as “Cow Bay” and “Donovan’s Lane.” You may hear the noise of fighting any night now in that region, sometimes rather alarming in its character, and homicides are of frequent occurrence, while the counters of the dark and dreadful saloons are chipped with knife-thrusts and dented with pistol-balls; but not, as of yore, are the Points the scene of one continual street-brawl; nor, as in the days when “Cow-legged Sam,” “Irish Mike,” “Family Pat,” “Yellow Bill,” and their associates flourished, will you hear a dozen cries of murder at once, in as many directions. At the Franklin street station, sixty prisoners were frequently brought in during one night. Officers were busy from the time they went out until they were relieved. Much as the two missions erected in the locality did toward its regeneration,—or rather extinction,—they would have had little effect had it not been for the support of the swift and tireless clubs. These preached a gospel the Five Points could not fail to comprehend. An anecdote or two will show what it meant to be a “cop” in the Points twenty years ago, and will give an idea of the danger of police life—a peril scarcely less in these latter days.

One of the patrolmen on duty there was



Charles McDonnell, now the trusted captain of probably the worst precinct in the city—the Eighth. He was one night walking his post, when he heard cries of “Murder! Watch!” coming from the alley known as Cow Bay. It was very dark, but he went in at once. As he entered, he saw the flash and heard the report of a pistol, and felt the

an out-house, and surprised a strange man hidden inside, whom he knocked down and secured before he could resist. Examining, McDonnell found that the pistol-ball had gone completely through the straight leather visor of his cap, and stunned him with its spent force; he still carries the scar. In making another arrest at the Points, McDonnell



ONE OF THE BROADWAY SQUAD.

ball strike his head. It caused him to stagger; but he stumbled ahead, and remembers stepping over a prostrate woman, and coming fairly to his senses in the court-yard beyond. There he began a search, and soon found a pistol in front of the door of

received through his hand the pistol-ball aimed at his head, then knocked his assailant down and beat him into submission, after which he was too weak from loss of blood to take his prisoner to the station-house.

“Yellow Bill,” a mulatto, his “pal,” and



a woman named Mary Ann Murray, were the first garroters in New York, and were arrested by Officer Sherlocke, who is now a foreman in the street-cleaning bureau. The woman enticed into a dark alley, where now are the opium-selling establishments of the Chinese, a sailor who was supposed to have a large sum of money, and the men robbed him. They got only six cents, but the men were sent to state-prison for twenty years each and the woman for ten years. That scared garroters, and when another received a sentence of forty years, this form of highway robbery ceased.

Every street and broad alley in the city is divided into a series of "posts" or "beats," patrolled by a single officer, which vary in length according to the locality, some in the northern part of the island being many blocks in length, while others in the lower wards are scarcely two blocks long, and are intersected by other posts. Besides this, officers are stationed at much-frequented corners and street-crossings, at railway stations, steamboat landings, wharves, ferries, places of amusement, in the municipal offices, and elsewhere on special duty. It is common cant that a policeman is always present—except when wanted. In the lower part of New York this is more slang than sense. How far will you walk in the region of Canal street, for example, before meeting a policeman—that is, if you look for one, for it is his policy to remain inconspicuous? Lower Broadway, dim and gloomy at midnight, is full of police, furiously shaking the handles of the doors to be sure that all are securely locked, peering through the little peep-holes in the iron shutters to see that no burglars are at work in the stores where lights are left burning all night, or that an incipient fire is not working insidious destruction; lurking out of sight in shady door-ways while they watch suspicious loungers; or standing in groups of two or three on the corners where two posts intersect and a roundsman has happened to join them. Leaving Broadway and glancing down dark and fearful back streets, like Bayard or Elizabeth, West Houston or Sullivan, you are sure to see the flickering light of the street lamps and the ruddy glare of red sign-lanterns reflected from the silver shield and brass buttons. Go where you may, you meet these erect and wide-awake watchmen. They are strolling through the deserted avenues of Washington Market; they are watching intently the excited throng in the Bowery; they are keeping an eye on rogues

in Madison square; they are pulling silently in and out of the shadows of the great ships lying asleep at the wharves; they are drowsing as "reserves" in the thirty-four station-houses, ready on telegraphic summons to go to the care of a fire or the subduing of a riot. The worshiper, coming from his weekly prayer-meeting, finds the policeman at the door, enforcing his coveted quiet. The family that goes for a day's recreation at Rockaway is sure that its pleasure will not be spoiled by rowdyism, for a group of officers stand on the deck, seemingly absorbed in the magnificence of a summer morning on the bay, yet ready—ready! The opera-glasses sweeping the audience at "Faust" or "The Shaughran," catch sight of a blue-coat or two behind the ranks of white ribbons and pretty plumes.

Though honest men sometimes do not seem able to put their finger upon a policeman at the instant they want him, rogues find far oftener that the "peelers" are on hand when *not* wanted. Go to Chatham square some night, break a window and run; how far do you suppose you would get? Or, go to Broadway and Sixth avenue and fire a revolver; how long would you keep that pistol? Let me snatch an apple from an old woman's stand in Fulton Market, and she would have me under lock and key in twenty minutes, if she thought it worth the trouble. Wander where he will in this vast city, the ruffian or vagrant cannot get away from the Law. It follows him into his home, waits at all his resorts for amusement, and can often tell him better than he knows himself what he has been doing for twenty-four hours. This constant surveillance exasperates bad characters. They chafe under the restraint, and make feeble efforts to rebel; but it is useless. The power of the police over the lower and evil circles of society is enormous; they have a mortal fear of the force. They know that behind that silver shield there resides indomitable courage, and in that closely buttoned coat are muscles of iron and nerves of steel. The "Bowery Boys"—and roughs of New York are all cowards, and they know it. They dare not meet half their weight of righteous pluck. I have seen a great bully cringe and cry under a policeman's open-handed cuffing, who had always avowed himself ready to fight any number of persons on the smallest provocation. Very likely he has a bowie-knife, or revolver, or slung-shot—or all three in one, as I saw one night in Twenty-eighth street—in his pocket at the time; yet he



does not attempt to use it on the officer of the law. The occasional exceptions to this are rare and notable. How many times have single policemen arrested a man out of a crowd, and no one of his fellows raised a finger to help him! They dare not. They have too wholesome a respect for the law, for that locust, for that revolver in the pocket; most of all are they awed by the cool courage of the *man* who dares to face them on their own ground.

In 1873, "Mulligan's Hall" was a basement saloon in Broome street. It had been growing worse and worse, and one evening, hearing a disturbance, Captain Williams and the officer on that post went in. There were thirty-eight persons, men and women, of every color and nationality, all of the worst character and some notorious in crime. The captain took in the situation at a glance, and determined with a thought to arrest the whole party. Placing his back to the front door, he covered the back door with his revolver, and threatened death to the first person who moved. Then he sent the patrolman to the station for help, and for fifteen long minutes held that crowd of desperadoes at bay. They glared at him, squirmed and twisted in their places, scowled and grated clenched teeth, itched to get at their knives and tear him to pieces; but all the while the stern mouth of that revolver looked at them, and looked them out of countenance, and the steady nerve behind it held sway over their brutal ferocity. It was a trial of nerve and endurance. Captain Williams stood the test and saved his life. He wonders now why they did not shoot him a dozen times. Certainly it was not because they had any scruples, for the first two prisoners sent to the station killed Officer Burns with a paving-stone before they had gone two blocks. Captain Allaire made an almost precisely similar single-handed raid on the famous "Burnt Rag" saloon in Bleecker street, one winter night in 1875.

But police work is as varied as it is incessant. No hour of the twenty-four is the city left unguarded, and during the night double vigilance is maintained. The white gloves and pretty rosewood batons of the day watch are exchanged at six o'clock for the heavier coat, the sterner mien, and the long hickory club. Yet patiently guarding property and vigorously hammering heads are only the extremes of a policeman's duty. He must look out for fires, and help ladies and school-children across Broadway; cause

unlicensed venders to "move on," and reckless drivers to "hold up;" must dig charred corpses out of theater-ruins and drag "moist unpleasant bodies" out of the docks; must march at the head of proud processions and meekly lead lost children and drunken beldames to the station-house; must face discomfort and danger and death in all weathers and at any moment without flinching—or must take off the shield!

One of the things the police have to deal with is vagrants, and many of the stations have lodging-rooms for tramps. Those at the Fourth precinct will serve as a type. Behind the front office and the captain's warm and pleasant parlor, which must seem the picture of luxury to the vagabond, as he catches sight of it through the half-open door, is a little covered court, beyond which are the cells. On either hand narrow stair-ways lead up to four rooms over the cells, two of which are given to the men, and two to the women, being separated by a brick wall. Each of these rooms is fifty feet long and ten feet wide. Along its whole length runs an iron frame, eighteen inches high, sufficient to support a series of broad planks, a pile of which appears at one end. When a lodger comes in, he takes one of the planks, places it on the frame so that it slants a little from head to foot, and lies down with his boots for a pillow and his coat for covering. On a cold night all the planks are taken at an early hour, and fifty men or fifty women lie heaped on the long platform. Next, the floor of the aisle is occupied, and finally, as more come in, they will crawl under the platform until a mouse could hardly thread his way through this mass of humanity. Such a lodging-room at twelve o'clock of a "full night" is as vile as the Black Hole of Calcutta. Heat is supplied through gratings in the floor, and necessarily brings with it the ventilation of the cells. Sixty or seventy unwashed, gin-steeped bodies add indescribable stench, while the snoring of stertorous breathers, the groaning of wakeful lodgers or the driveling of drunken ones, the scream of some frightened dreamer or the querulous wail of a sick child, unite to make a Babel of horrible sounds. A single flickering gas-light sends feeble beams through the laden air, and every ray touches a pile of rags that in the morning will hatch out a tramp.

There seems little doubt that New York's system of caring for vagrants is fifty years behind the times. It is pretty certain that no public lodging-rooms ought to be at-



tached to any police station. They cause dirt and vermin and disease, otherwise avoided, among officers and prisoners. If the city must provide sleeping-places for its destitute, let them be entirely devoted to that purpose. Said a police captain to the writer, "Offer the lodgers a chance to wash, and give them in the morning a cup of coffee and a roll of bread. Then they will have the heart to go and find something to do. Now we turn them into the street at daylight, unwashed and unfed. In less than ten minutes they can feel the marrow freezing in their bones, and grow reckless of behavior. If they wont work, label them 'tramp,' and make them earn their bread under a task-master's eye on the streets. But a cup of coffee and a roll would make a citizen of many an outcast."

The tramp nuisance culminated about three years ago, when free soup-houses were established, and vagrants flocked into the city from all directions. It was notorious that the authorities of small towns paid the fares of tramps into this city, knowing that once here it would be for their interest to remain. Recently this nuisance has greatly abated, owing to an order instructing the officers of the station-houses to arrest those vagrants who regularly presented themselves for lodgings. The surprise and disgust of the professional "rounders" can be imagined, when they found themselves locked up, where they had expected only hospitable treatment. Those whom the police felt to be deserving were still allowed to remain at the station-houses. Finally the authorities made arrangements with some of the cheap lodging-houses through the city, and now when worthy persons apply for shelter they receive a card entitling them to a bed. The number of professional vagrants has consequently greatly decreased.

In the station-houses, the strictest rules of cleanliness are enforced. Scrupulous care on the part of the men in respect to personal appearance and the maxims of hygiene is insisted upon by the regulations, which prescribe not only the shape and color of the showy uniform, but the quality of the cloth, the tailors who shall make it, and the way it shall be worn. Every officer must have his dress complete and in neat order, collar of regulation shape, coat buttoned to the throat, boots well blackened, shield shining. The New York policeman must be ornamental as well as useful! The summer fatigue-coat is put on by general orders, the winter overcoat assumed by telegraphic direction.

During the day, in warm weather, the officers carry a short, heavy-headed baton, technically known as a "billy." In winter a light club hangs in the belt, turned from rosewood, ebony, or other precious wood, and draped with gaudy cord and tassels. Yet let not these fancy sticks be despised; they are hard! Those aristocrats, the Broadway squad, keep their clubs always out of sight. Night and day, a little bulldog of a revolver, loaded, is carried in the hip-pocket.

A policeman's time is reckoned by periods of four days, for he has no Sunday or holidays, save his annual summer leave of absence. Beginning at six P. M. on Sunday, for instance, he goes upon duty and paces his beat until midnight. Returning, he remains in the station-house on "reserve" duty until six A. M.; then goes out for eight hours, after which there is four hours' rest, bringing the time to six P. M. on Monday. At that hour he goes on duty again for six hours, followed by six hours' reserve duty, bringing it to six A. M. This is followed by two hours' patrol and five hours' reserve, ending at one P. M., Tuesday. Then begins five hours' patrol, six hours "in the house," and six hours more of patrol, ending at six A. M., Wednesday morning, after which he is "off," and goes where he pleases until six that evening, when he begins six hours of patrol followed by eight hours of reserve duty, five hours of patrolling again, then a rest of eleven hours in the station-house, then another six hours of post duty, and at six on Thursday evening he finds himself off once more for twelve hours. The following morning he begins it all over again. Thus, once in eight days he can stay at home all day, and every eighth night he can sleep at home. But he must not be tardy in returning to his work.

At six, morning and evening, and at twelve, noon and midnight, the sergeant on duty in each office taps his bell. The platoon which is to go on duty—each company is divided into two sections of two platoons each—files in from the waiting-room, dresses ranks, answers roll-call, is inspected to see that every man is in proper uniform, has his club, his revolver, his hand-cuffs, and his fire-alarm key. Then such general orders as have come from head-quarters are read, and at the words, "Draw batons, right face, march!" the blue-coats pass out and scatter to their posts. As fast as relieved, the men who have been on duty during the previous six hours return to the station.



There are two subordinate officers in each platoon, called roundsmen, whose duty it is to go the rounds of the posts and see that every patrolman is faithful. The sergeant of the section is also supposed to make a tour of observation, and the captain is likely to be wandering about in citizen's dress at all hours, so that the patrolmen find themselves sufficiently watched; while the four inspectors who divide between them the supervision of all the precincts, keep a critical eye on the captains and sergeants. But, to guard against any collusion between any officers and any privates to shirk duty, the present board of police has devised a system of daily written reports from every man in the force, so designed as to be a self-acting check upon every man's statements. Each filled-out blank must show the manner in which the writer has performed his duty, the condition of his post, at what time the roundsman, sergeant or captain visited him; or, in the case of these officers, when and where they saw their men, or brother officers, what unusual events occurred during the hours of work, and everything else noteworthy. All this is daily given to the sergeants at the station, who unite in reporting to the captain, who each day sends in his report to the superintendent through the office of the inspector of his district. You see them writing these memoranda in all sorts of nooks, and frequently you may observe a patrolman and a roundsman with their heads together, and little books in hand, writing with frequent comparison of pages. To the uninitiated it looks very much as though they were balancing statements to square each other's record. But there is so much complexity about the system, and such trivial details are to be regarded, that the best-intentioned policemen may easily find themselves in confusion, and need help to make their integrity plain. Their dissatisfaction with the whole system is outspoken; they say it is useless.

Each arrest, fire, accident, or other notable circumstance, as soon as it happens, is telegraphed from the precinct to head-quarters, where a copy of the dispatch is given to the reporters of each of the daily newspapers, who, night or day, are never absent. Police head-quarters thus become the center of information, and every officer in the force is made a purveyor of local news.

The quarterly statistics of the department furnish some curious information. From the report for the first three months of 1878, it appears that the total strength of

the force on March 31st was 2,517, but this is somewhat increased now. There were arrested during that period 18,910 persons, against 23,064 the preceding quarter, one third being females. As to nationality, Ireland furnished twice as many criminals as all the rest of the world together, except the United States, while in respect to occupation, the largest number arrested were laborers, the next largest had no occupation; and then followed housekeepers, prostitutes, drivers, servants, peddlers, sailors, shoemakers, butchers, tailors, printers, painters, seamstresses, and on through a long list of industries. As for offenses, the arrests were mainly for "intoxication" (3,569 males and 1,575 females), "disorderly conduct" (2,341 males and 1,177 females), "drunk and disorderly" (1,222 males and 780 females), "larceny," "assault," and almost every conceivable form of wickedness, from murder to cock-fighting. The age of the majority of the prisoners of both sexes was between twenty and thirty years, and one-third more men, and two-thirds more women, were single than married. Only one in fifteen could neither read nor write. Besides this work, the statistics show that 36,864 lodgings were furnished to indigent persons, against 79,105 for the same period in 1875; 937 lost children were recovered, 1,095 sick, injured, or destitute persons cared for, 32 rescued from drowning, 418 fires reported, while in the corresponding quarter of 1877 the street-cleaning bureau removed 276,575 loads of snow, ice, and garbage, and the sanitary company tested 606 steam boilers. These statistics vary in their character from quarter to quarter, according to the season, *et cetera*; but the average is well preserved, enlarging as the city grows. The police can hardly hope to prevent the increase of the aggregate amount of crime with the increase of population, but they strive to regulate it, and succeed better than many persons who have no idea of the difficulties are likely to give them credit for.

The annual expense to the city of the department is at present about \$4,000,000. Owing to the higher salaries paid throughout, if not, in some degree, to less economical methods of administration, this is far in excess of the cost of the departments of either London or Paris. Yet it is doubtful whether there is much real grumbling, so long as the citizens are satisfied of its honest disbursement, at the vast amount of money paid to secure the comfort and pride New York feels in her splendid police.